DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 211 889 CG 015 681

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TITLE Sex Differences in Graduate Psychology Trainees: Dilemmas of Externships?
PUB DATE Aug 81
NOTE 25p.; Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association (89th, Los Angeles, CA, August 24-26, 1981).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Consultants; Counselor Characteristics; *Counselor Evaluation; *Counselor Performance; *Counselor Training; Feedback; *Graduate Students; Higher Education; *Practicum Supervision; Process Education; Psychology; *Sex Differences; Transfer of Training

ABSTRACT

Despite the efforts of counselor educators, female graduate psychology trainees still tend to receive more negative ratings than male trainees. To study this observation, 21 graduate students were evaluated by male and female supervisors. Input process and outcome variables were analyzed. The data showed that young women psychologists worked mainly with same sex consultees of relatively low status in the organization. Males were more likely to be involved with administrative staff, who were often males. Male trainees tended to stay more actively involved with their cases. In open-ended questions, females received more comments about their appearance; women were also apparently given a narrower range of appropriate behavior in terms of aggressiveness. The findings indicate that teaching may not be enough to create changes in this observed phenomenon. (JAC)

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ED211889

# Sex Differences in Graduate Psychology Trainees: Dilemmas of Externships?

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CG 015681

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Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association, Los Angeles, 1981

In the past several years, I have been training graduate psychology students in consultation. The training is both didactic and experiential. All of the students do both traditional academic assignments plus work in a child-related agency. In Appendix A is a summary of the training competancies and activities.

By the end of the first year of training I had noticed a strange (to me) difference between the men and women trainees. I realized that women (but not men) were reporting difficulties "doing things" at their sites and that most women (but not most men) got at least one negative open-ended comment along with slightly lower numerical ratings from their supervisors. One male did get one "negative" comment, "Acts feminine."

This fact, substantiated consistently over the next 3 years, caused me to try to train the women and men in ways that would facilitate their appearing at-ease, in charge, and strong in their setting. Essentially I taught group leadership skills, told them about the importance of eye contact and body orientation, videotaped tough role-plays, did power simulations etc. (Conoley, 1980a). It also caused me to take a hard look at me and how I must appear to the young female psychologists. I was, early in my career, the youngest and only female on a 35 member psychology faculty. I have reported on my own activities elsewhere (Conoley, 1980b), but essentially I became "connected" to powerful people and activities at the University and in the community. I noticed that female students stopped saying they could not (were not allowed to) do certain activities. In the main,

however, although females' ratings got higher every year, they remain outstripped by their male counterparts.

I decided to do a comprehensive analysis of the trainees on all the variables I had access to including input, process, and outcome measures.

## Method

### Subjects

Twenty one male and 35 female graduate students, all white, between the ages of 23 and 36 make up the sample. All were enrolled in 60 hours masters or doctoral training mainly in School Psychology, but also some in social, clinical, and educational psychology, special education, and management. Some of their evaluations came from field based supervising psychologists (at both doctoral and masters level) who had at least 3 years of post degree experience. There were 12 female and 12 male supervisiors.

### Instruments

A variety of measuring devices were employed.A thirty eight item evaluation instrument was completed twice each year for each trainee (Appendix B). Audiotapes were analyzed as were structured log accounts of each consultation session (Appendix C). The trainess' backgrounds were noted in terms of age, prior experience and degree, overall GPA's, and academic performance in the consultation course.

### Procedures

Input process and outcome variables were collected and analyzed with a variety of statistical procedures due to data heterogeneity. The process data to be presented represents 541 (Females' N=243; Males' N=298) consultation sessions over a 3 year period.

## Results

### Input variables

No differences were apparent between males and females in age (Male X=26.4; Female X=26); prior degree (modal degree =BA in psychology; years experience (Male X=3.8 years; Female X=3.9 years) overall GPA (Male X=3.76; Females-3.80); and course performance (modal grade for both =A) The only person to fail the course was a male, "B's" were earned equally by males and females.

### Process Variables

Male and female consultants were compared along the following process dimensions using the self report structured log as the data source : with whom did they consult, which model they chose, the various verbal processes used, components of the remedial plan they developed with the consultee; number of interviews used to complete a consultation case; and finally, the problems they worked on. The results of these analysis are presented in Tables 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. These tables report the frequencies of the counsultants' activities transformed into percentages to allow for ease of comparison.

These same data were analyzed using a multiple discriminant analysis to discover which of the many differences between the males and females were signinficantly different from chance. These results are indicated on Tables 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 by astericks. This analysis revealed differences in consultee choice with males more likely to consult with administrators and counselors and females more likely to consults with teachers (who were mainly

females); in choice of consultation model with females more likely to engage in behavioral and client centered models and males more likely to use consultee centered, advocacy and program; in consultation problem with females more likely to work on behavioral (acting out) problems and males more likely to work with consultees on problems with parents: and in length of case with male consultants tending to have more interviews per case than female consultants. Consultants also showed perceived differences in 11 of 17 verbal processes they used with consultees with men appearing more active and "in charge" and women as somewhat on the non-directive, collabortive end of the continium. There were apparently no differences in the types of remedial plans developed by male and female consultants. Those data are given as Table 6.

Outcome Variables

Systematic differences are apparent on the 38 item skills assessment device. In Table 7 is a summary of those findings. Although these statistically significant differences are slight it is interesting to note that males outscored females on 29 of the 38 skills. In addition the open-ended comments about females included: "comes on too strong"; "seems too brusque or assertive"; "doesn't dress up enough"; "not professioanl looking" (or "very professional and elegant looking"); "seems dependent." The pattern was for most women 94% to receive at least one negative comment while most men, 96% received only positive comments.

## Discussion

There are certain limitations to the data presented that should be highlighted before discussing the results. First, in terms of the process data, some of the logs might be affected by memory because the consultant filled it out after the session was over. Not all are vulnerable to this because many of the sessions were taped and the consultant filled out the log while listening to the tape. Secondly, as with all coding schemes there were uncodable statements that might have been important to investigate. And finally, there may have been some selectivity in handing in logs. There was certainly a bias for men to hand in more reports even though there were fewer male consultants.

Despite these limitations, I feel these data are somewhat informative about female psychologists' training in externship sites. I see a pattern emerging from the data that looks like this: young women psychologists work mainly with same sex consultees of relatively low status in the organization. They concentrate on classroom problems using the more traditional models of consultation. During interviews with teachers they tend to be relatively passive, and make mainly non-directive, non-threatening, and collaborative statements. The female psychologist tends to end her involvement with a case in a relatively short time and not make many follow-up visits. Despite these differences the female psychologists show equal flexibility as her male counterpart in developing remedial plans for the client.

In contrast, young male psychologists are more likely to be involved with administrative or quasi-administrative staff who are often males. They tend to use more risk-taking or systemic models of consultation (advocacy, consultee centered, program). In addition, they perceive themselves to be more active, directive, expert in their sessions with teachers, tending to emit and elicit many statements. The male consultants tend to work with consultees and to check back with them for a relatively long time--up to 11 sessions for a single case. They tend to involve themselves with extra-classroom activities especially as a liaison with parents.

Two things jump out at me. First, the male psychologists in the setting act more like the males in the setting do. They are active, systemically involved and they tend to associate with available other-males. Conversely, the female psychologists, although obviously competent in terms of intervention, act more like the female teachers with whom they mainly associate.

Second, the male trainees stay more actively involved with their cases. One interpretation might be that the females do the job faster! Even if this were true, however, we know from other related research (Tyler & Fine, 1974; White & Fine, 1976) that intense involvement and follow-up contact are perceived as very desireable by consultees. On this second point,

be assured that all students, male and female, were told of this finding and encouraged to act accordingly. Why are the males more likely to do so?

It seems that part of the difference in outcome evaluations between the consultants might be explained by the 1) perceived activity levels of the consultants 2) the greater visibility of the males and 3) the tendency for the males to associate with a major contributor to the evaluation. The supervising psychologist would typically elicit feedback from principals or other support staff before completing the evaluation. There were no apparent effects of supervisor sex on supervisee ratings. Male and female supervisors both preferred male trainees.

The open-ended comments about the students may also be instructive to trainers. Females received many more comments about appearance (this has been found in other studies). One male received such a comment. Female trainees were often complimented on their looks. One principal, however, reported that the student was "not polished" and "didn't look professional". It seemed that on a few occasions the consultant had delivered resource materials to teachers, on other than her regular placement day, wearing jeans. The feedback is important and was immediately responded to. It is interesting, however, that her dress was noticed (the teachers in that school wore jeans) and not her extra hours of service. Many male trainees received such praise for "above the call of duty" involvement.

The women were apparently given a narrower band of appropriate behavior than were men. No male was called aggressive or brusque. Women were said to "come on too strong." The world not being a fair place, however, women were also criticized for being overly dependent or hysterical.

I have alternately conceptualized the problem as residing in the female (train her!), in me (poor modeling or low status), or in the environment (women's work!). I lean toward the person-environment interaction alternative. In an analogue study of consultation (Conoley & Conoley, in press) male and female consultants performed similarly on many of the variables mentioned previously as showing significant differences. This study was, however, an analogue. The point of that study was not even to test for sex differences, but with the data reported in this paper in hand, I and Rodda (Note 2) re-analyzed. Nothing there! In other words (I think), the females have the behaviors shown by men in their repertoire but don't show them because of the male dominated externship culture or women grossly underestimate their activity levels in terms of process variables. This last possibility is clearly testable and deserves some attention. The findings of others on this panel leads me to hypothesize, however, that there are differences in psychologist behaviors and that these are exacerbated by the culture, norms, and climate of training sites.

Now what? The problems of transfer of training are approachable through role play and simulation, although there is already a lot of that in the training sequence. My visibility

and connectedness with school administrators seems to have some positive spillover effects on students. It may be time. It may be the gradual evolution of school psychology into a primarily doctoral rather than masters level occupation. In the meantime, teaching is not enough. Social change, however slow, is perhaps the only answer.

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Table 1

Percentage of Consultation to Various Consultees

| | Consultees | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Consultants | Teachers | Admin. | Counselors | Staff | Parent |
| Female | 55 * | 37 * | 0 * | 23 | 23 * |
| Male | 45 * | 63 * | 100 * | 77 | 77 * |

*p <.001

Table 2

Choice of Consultation Model

| | Models | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Consultants | Behavioral | Advocacy | Process | Consultee-Centered | Program |
| Female | 48 * | 10 * | 23 | 44 * | 24 * |
| Male | 51 * | 90 * | 77 | 56 * | 76 * |

* p <.001

Table 3

Verbal Processes Used During Consultation

| Processes | Females | Males |
|---|---|---|
| Prob. I.D. 1 | 49 * | 51 |
| Prob. Analysis 2 | 44 | 55 |
| Plan Developed 3 | 35 * | 65 |
| Eval. Prin. Plan 4 | 48 * | 52 |
| Offer to share responsibility 5 | 40 | 60 |
| Share Information 6 | 40 | 60 |
| Prob. &/or Information 7 | 35 * | 65 |
| Verbal $S^{Rt}$ 8 | 37 * | 63 |
| Direct Confront 9 | 5 * | 95 |
| Indirect Confront 10 | 24 | 76 |
| Provide Alternatives 11 | 44 * | 56 |
| Summarize 12 | 38 * | 62 |
| Encourage 13 | 38 * | 62 |
| Validation 14 | 42 | 58 |
| Clarify 15 | 44 * | 56 |
| Empathize 16 | 44 | 56 |
| Probe for Feelings 17 | 40 * | 60 |

* $p < .0001$

Table 4

Percent of Consultation Interviews

In a Single Case

| Consultant | Interview | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| Female | 49 | 43 | 42 | 54 | 35 | 20 | 19 | 13 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Male | 50 | 57 | 58 | 65 | 65* | 80* | 81* | 87* | 100* | 100* | 100* |

* p <.0001

Table 5

Consultation Problems

| | Problems | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Consultant | Withdrawn | Academic | Behavioral | Parental |
| Female | 52 | 34 | 56* | 47* |
| Male | 48 | 66 | 43 | 53 |

* p <.0001

Table 6

Consultation Plans Developed

| Components | Females | Males |
|---|---|---|
| Parent Conference | 36 | 64 |
| Curriculum Change | 41 | 58 |
| Staff Development | 35 | 65 |
| Inservice Training | 28 | 72 |
| Role Play | 29 | 71 |
| Advocacy | 28 | 72 |
| Positive Reinforcement | 41 | 59 |
| Aversive Conditioning | 35 | 65 |
| Differential Reinforcement | 48 | 52 |
| Teacher Meeting | 37 | 63 |
| Modeling | 29 | 71 |
| Prompting | 32 | 68 |
| Change S. | 32 | 68 |
| Response Guidance | 20 | 80 |
| Non-Contingent Reinforcement | 33 | 68 |
| Task Alteration | 48 | 52 |
| Extinction | 48 | 52 |
| Counseling | 26 | 74 |
| Testing | 41 | 60 |
| Classroom Observation | 40 | 60 |

No significant differences between these

Table 7

Summary of Evaluation Data from Field Supervisors Concerning Trainees

| General Competencies | Males | Females |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Evaluation Assessment | 4.46* | 4.27 |
| 2. Intervention | 4.52* | 4.09 |
| 3. Communication-Collaboration | 4.43 | 4.36 |
| 4. Consultation | 4.35* | 4.13 |
| 5. Inservice Training | 3.00* | 4.33 |
| 6. Research/Program aluation | 4.0 | 4.66 |
| 7. Interpersonal Styles | 4.72* | 4.0 |
| Overall | 4.68* | 4.02 |

* p <.05

APPENDIX A

Competencies of Year-long Consultation Training

| Competency | Learning experience | Assessment |
|---|---|---|
| Knowledge of four theoretical models of consultation: Mental health, behavioral, advocacy, and process | 1. Readings by Caplan, Schein, Abidin, Biklen, Stein, Altrocci, Alpert, Sarason, and others<br>2. Written papers comparing and contrasting models<br>3. Class lectures by instructor on each of the models<br>4. Development of annotated bibliography on the consultation models | Written assignments assessed, corrective feedback given, and assignments resubmitted if necessary until attainment of at least a B grade |
| Ability to engage in the four theoretical models at appropriate times according to the presenting situation | 1. Role plays during seminar, supervision, and laboratory training sessions<br>2. Case presentations with appropriate models described<br>3. One day/wk field placement doing consultation | 1. Supervisor feedback on role plays and case presentations<br>2. Field supervisor feedback on practicum experiences |
| Ability to synthesize a personal model of consultation intervention | 1. Supervisory meetings focused on the development of consistent models<br>2. Paper describing synthesized model at the end of the year | 1. Assessment of videotapes of supervisory sessions<br>2. Assesment of written statement |
| Expertise in listening and feedback skills | 1. Laboratory training and practice during supervisory meeting<br>2. Videotapes of supervision analyzed along these dimensions<br>3. Audiotapes of consultative sessions analyzed | 1. Assessment of video and audio tapes<br>2. Feedback from field supervisors<br>3. Feedback from peers |
| Ability to both enter into and terminate smoothly from individual consultative relationships | 1. Class lecture and discussion of entry and termination issues<br>2. Actual entry to and termination from the practicum organization<br>3. Role plays<br>4. Development of sample contracts | 1. Assessment of an "Entry paper"<br>2. Assessment of description of entry in supervisory meeting<br>3. Feedback from field supervisors |
| Knowledge of the theory and application of evaluation methods | 1. Class lecture and discussion on evaluation theory presented by evaluation expert<br>2. Development of appropriate assessment instruments to investigate: (a) Consultant effectiveness; and (b) Organizational needs<br>3. Undertaking of evaluation of consultation services with appropriate data analysis | 1. Assessment of evaluation instruments<br>2. Results of student initiated evaluation procedure |

| Competency | Learning experience | Assessment |
|---|---|---|
| Ability to design and deliver in-service training to consultees | 1. Development of needs assessment instrument<br>2. Development of an in-service program with appropriate didactice and experiential elements<br>3. Development of in-service evalation instruments | 1. Needs assessment and evaluation instrument<br>2. When in-service is actually delivered, o the spot supervision<br>3. Grading of planned in-service |
| Expertise in design and implementation of preventive mental health strategies | 1. Class lectures and discussions on community mental health concepts<br>2. Written proposal for preventive intervention in practicum organization | 1. Assessment of written proposals<br>2. Field and university supervisor assessment of actual preventive intervention |
| Ability to diagnose organizational variables and design, implement, and evaluate appropriate interventions | 1. Diagnosis of supervisory group as an organization<br>2. Development implementation and evaluation of an appropriate intervention | 1. Feedback from peers<br>2. Assessment by supervisor<br>3. Reassessment of supervisory group |
| Expertise in the code of ethics governing psychologists as described in the APA code of ethics | 1. Reading APA code of ethnics<br>2. Class discusion of code<br>3. Supervisory sessions devoted to development of understanding of ethnical issues | |
| Awareness of personal impact in the consultative relationship | 1. Laboratory training aimed at increasing self awareness<br>2. Supervisory session devoted to giving and receiving of feedback about personal characteristics that interact with professional role | 1. Field and university supervisors assessment of such characteristics as openness, levels of anxiety, and self-disclosure, and amount of improvement in consultation skills over the year<br>2. Analysis of videotapes of supervisory sessions |

Appendix B

School Psychologist Trainee Evaluation Form

Date of Evaluation:_____

Trainee:_____

Field Supervisor:_____

University Supervisor:_____

Directions: The ratings of trainees should be based upon actual observation and/or reports received from staff, parents, students, etc., regarding trainee performance. Circle the number of the scale that best describes the intern's competence as given in the description below. Rate each category independently. A description of scale points is provided below.

1 - competence considered to be in need of further training and/or require additional growth, maturation, and change on the part of the trainee in order for him/her to be effective in the various skill areas;

2 - competencies currently considered to be below average but which, with further supervision and experience are expected to develop satisfactorily; close supervision is required;

3 - competence at least at minimal level necessary for functioning with moderate supervision required;

4 - competencies assessed to be above average, suggesting a minimal need for supervision;

5 - competencies very developed and reflect capability for independent functioning with little or no supervision required;

No Data - insufficient data to make rating at this time.

## School Psychologist Trainee Evaluation Form

General Competencies — Rating

1. Evaluation - Assessment

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Intellectual | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | No Data |
| Social-Emotional | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | No Data |
| Interviewing Skills | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | No Data |
| Behavioral Assessment | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | No Data |
| Ability to Integrate Data | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | No Data |
| Other (_____) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | No Data |

2. Intervention

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Practicality | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | No Data |
| Appropriateness to Problems | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | No Data |
| Specificity of Recommendations | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | No Data |
| Provision for Followup | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | No Data |
| Implementation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | No Data |
| Actual Followup | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | No Data |

3. Communication and Collaboration

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Teacher Conferencing | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | No Data |
| Parent Conferencing | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | No Data |
| Administrative Conferencing | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | No Data |
| Case Staffing | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | No Data |
| Reporting (written) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | No Data |

4. Consultation

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Problem/Need Identification | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | No Data |
| Plan Formulation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | No Data |
| Plan Implementation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | No Data |
| Followup and Evaluation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | No Data |

5. In-service Training

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Planning | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | No Data |
| Implementation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | No Data |
| Followup and Evaluation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | No Data |

Appendix C

STRUCTURED CONSULTANT LOG

(1,23) Consultant's name_____
Consultee's name_____
(4) role _____
(5) sex _____
(6) age _____
Client discussed:
(7) sex _____
(8) age _____
(9, 10) Case # _____
(11,12) Interview # _____

(13,14,15) Referral date_____
(16,17,18) Interview date_____
(19) Organization_____
(20) Model of consultation
Client-centered _____
Consultee-centered_____
Behavioral _____
Process _____
Advocacy _____
Program _____

1. Check as many processes as you employed during this interview and rank order the top 3 (in terms of frequency).

(21) problem identification _____
(22) problem analysis _____
(23) plan developed _____
(24) evaluation of prior plans _____
(25) offer to share responsibility _____
(26) share information _____
(27) probe for information _____
(28) verbal reinforcement _____
(29) direct confrontation _____
(30) indirect confrontation _____
(31) providing alternatives _____
(32) summarizing _____
(33) encouraging _____
(34) validating _____
(35) clarifying _____
(36) empathizing _____
(37) probe for feelings _____
(38) other (specify) _____

2. What are some components of the plan you developed?

(41) parent conference _____
(42) curriculum change _____
(43) staff development _____
(44) inservice _____
(45) role playing _____
(46) advocacy _____
(47) additon of a positive reinforcer _____
(48) removal of an aversive _____
(49) differential reinforcement of other behavior _____
(50) involved teachers meeting _____
(51) modeling _____
(52) prompting _____
(53) establishing, removing or altering an SD _____
(54) physical response guidance _____
(55) noncontingent application of reinforcers _____
(56) task alteration _____
(57) extinction _____
(58) counseling _____
(59) testing _____
(60) classroom observation _____
(61) other (specify) _____

3. Rate the receptivity of your consultee

(62) very closed _____ quite receptive
1 2 3 4 5

4. (63) Write a one sentence description of the problem:

5. Rate the severity of the problem as you see it:

(64) severe _____ mild
1 2 3 4 5

As consultee sees it:

(65) severe _____ mild
1 2 3 4 5

6. How are you evaluating your consultative effort?

(66) feedback from consultee _____
(67) observation of client _____
(68) feedback from supervisors _____
(69) none _____
(70) other (specify) _____

7. What are the results of your evaluation?

(71) from consultee
very poor _____ very good
1 2 3 4 5

(72) from client observation
very poor _____ very good
1 2 3 4 5

(73) from supervisors
very poor _____ very good
1 2 3 4 5

(74) other
very poor _____ very good
1 2 3 4 5